



Windows Small Business Server

A server makes a network more secure, cuts troubleshooting time and makes your business more productive. Karl Wright explains how to set up Microsoft's small business software

Using Windows Small Business Server 2003, you can control all your company's PCs remotely from a single point. This allows you to install updates to several PCs at once and to fix problems remotely. You can reduce administration time and help keep the PCs on your network stable and secure by making sure they're up to date with security patches and bug fixes. Unlike normal PCs, a server remains on all the time, so resources such as printers and shared folders are always available. This means you don't have to phone someone on holiday to get the password for their computer to find that all-important file.

Even more importantly for your business, by using the Windows Server Active Directory service you can specify the rights of each individual user to every resource on your network. With this level of control, you can create a logical structure of user permissions that prevents employees doing or seeing anything they shouldn't, thereby helping to ensure the security of your business and the continued smooth-running of your company's network. As well as allowing you to take control of your company's network, Windows Small Business Server comes with several tools to make your company more efficient and productive, including the Microsoft Exchange email and calendaring application, the Microsoft SharePoint browser-based collaboration service, Internet Information Services and the Microsoft Internet Security and Acceleration Server.

In this article, the first of a three-part series, we explain how to install Windows Small Business Server and get it running. In the following instalments we'll show you how to use the Active Directory service and get the most from the advanced features of Windows Small Business Server.

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *Business Expert*. In this column, we'll show you everything you need to know about running the IT systems of your business smoothly and professionally. With our help, you'll have better IT and you'll be able to spend more time running your business.

Key to this is installing a server. This can help you manage your printers, PCs and other IT hardware centrally, increasing collaboration and reducing management.

This month we'll show you how to install and manage Microsoft's Windows Small Business Server.

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INSTALLING THE SOFTWARE

You need a spare PC to act as the server. Check that your server meets the operating system's minimum system requirements. Microsoft recommends a 1GHz processor with 1GB of RAM. Although the Microsoft website says you can get away with a lower

specification (a 750MHz processor with 512MB of RAM), we advise against it.

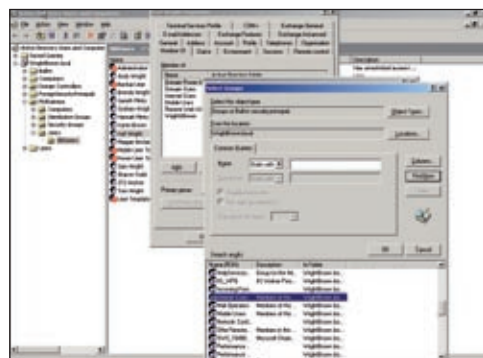
Installing Windows Small Business Server isn't that different from installing Windows XP (the Vista edition of Windows Small Business Server isn't on the market yet, but we'll take a sneak preview in the third article). For this reason, we won't go through the installation routine step by step, but focus on key differences and details that require special attention.

Make sure your PC is set up in the BIOS to boot from CD and boot your computer with the first Windows Small Business Server 2003 CD in the optical drive. Accept the terms and conditions, and choose the disk or partition on which you wish to install Small Business Server. The install routine will ask you how you want to format your disk or partition. Choose NTFS, but not the Quick Format option.

Once your disk is formatted, the installation routine will reboot into a graphical wizard. The install routine scans your PC to make sure it meets the minimum requirements. If it doesn't, depending on the seriousness of the problem, you will either get a warning message or the installation will terminate. Next, you'll be asked to enter your company information and your domain name. Choose your domain name carefully. Even if you own a registered, fully qualified domain name such as computershopper.co.uk, you're better not using this as your internal domain name. Using your external domain name at this point can make it difficult for computers on your network to access externally hosted resources, such as the company website, that are registered under the same domain.

SETTING UP YOUR NETWORK

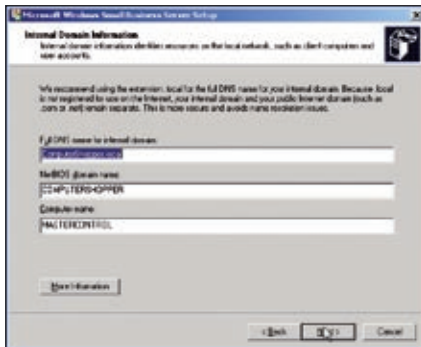
Once you've specified your domain name, assuming your server has two network cards, you'll be asked to specify which network card connects to your broadband internet and which to the local network. You don't need two network cards to install Windows Small Business Server, but if you have only one you won't be able to use the built-in firewall, Microsoft Internet Security and



▲ You can use Windows Small Business Server to control precisely how employees use the resources on your network and how they use the internet



▲ Windows Small Business Server's installation routine will be familiar to anyone who has ever installed Windows XP



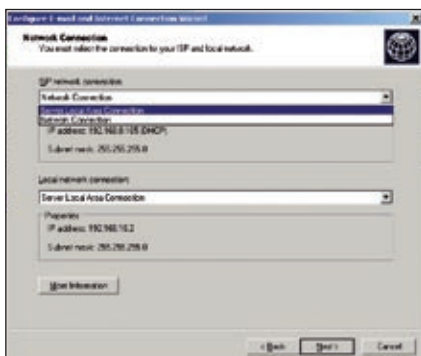
▲ When choosing a DNS name for your internal server, use the .local extension to avoid any confusion with external sites

Acceleration Server. This doesn't just provide an extra layer of security, but thanks to its (relatively) close integration with Active Directory it allows you to specify how different groups of users can access the internet (or not). Make sure you specify the right card as your internal adaptor – you don't want to block access to your local PCs by mistake. It's easy to tell which is which. By default, Windows Server assigns the IP address 192.168.16.2 to its local network adaptor. If one of your network adaptors has this IP address, it should be your local adaptor.

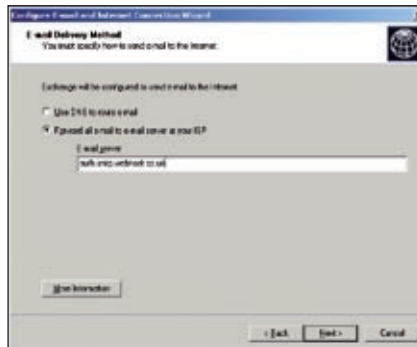
The rest of the installation will be time-consuming, because you're installing operating system components and also the applications that come with Windows Small Business Server 2003, such as Exchange, SharePoint and so on. There's nothing particularly complicated after this point. Just click through the install wizard without changing its default settings. Bear in mind that you will have to swap discs, as Windows Small Business Server comes on eight installation discs. Watch out for disc 7, too. It begins the install of SQL Server, but then asks you to insert disc 8 so the install can finish. Don't forget to go back and install Windows ISA Server once the SQL install has finished – otherwise, your server will not have a firewall.

A To-do list is displayed the first time Windows Small Business Server starts after the installation is complete. It's a good idea to work through it, completing the tasks relevant to you.

You need to get your server connected to the internet. From the To-do list in the Server Management console, click on Internet and Email and run the Email and Internet connection wizard. You'll be asked again to specify which network adaptor is connected to your local network and which to the internet. Assuming



▲ If you can't tell which network adaptor is local, simply unplug your broadband connection and the IP address information will go blank



▲ If you intend to use the Small Business Server POP3 Connector to download your mails, specify your ISP's SMTP server details here

that you got this right the first time, leave the settings alone and click through to the wizard. Make sure you enable internet mail, or else your employees will only be able to send mail to each other and no-one else.

When prompted to choose how you should send internet mail, choose 'Use DNS to route e-mail' if you plan to use Exchange to send and receive emails. If you want to use the calendaring and other functions of Exchange, but still want to use your ISP for email, enter the details of your ISP's SMTP server here.

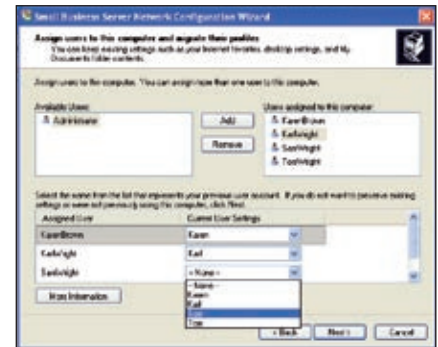
On the next screen, tell Windows Small Business Server how you wish to receive emails. You can use Exchange or your ISP, or a mixture of the two. If you choose to use the POP3 connector, you can configure this by entering the details of your ISP's POP3 email server later in the wizard. Unfortunately, Small Business Server does not have a built-in connector for IMAP, the other common email protocol used by ISPs.

ADDING PCs TO THE NEW DOMAIN

The next logical step is to connect your PCs to your server, making them part of your domain. There are two ways to do this. On the PC you wish to make part of your domain, you can just right-click My Computer, open the System Properties window, remove your PC from its workgroup and enter the local domain name instead; your computer will connect to the domain the next time you reboot it.

However, we don't recommend this method. Microsoft has provided a wizard that allows you to add client PCs and create user accounts with far greater precision. From the To-do list in the Server Management console, click Add Users and Computers to launch the Add User Wizard. On the next screen, choose a template account. Each template is associated with a different set of permissions in Active Directory, so be careful when choosing a template. An account created with the User template, for instance, will not be able to install new software or change important system settings, whereas a Power User can do all these things. Only your most trustworthy employees should be anything but a User – and even then only with very good reason.

Once you've chosen a template, click Next and enter the usernames you wish to assign to that template. On the next screen, enter the names of the computers you wish to associate with those user accounts. Finally, from the list provided, you should choose any applications and service packs you want to be installed automatically on the clients the first time they log on to the domain.



▲ Use the Connect Computer Wizard to get your client on the domain and match old user accounts on the local PC with new domain-level accounts

When you've finished the wizard routine, a message will pop up telling you to enter the following URL into the browsers of your client PCs:

<http://SERVERNAME/ConnectComputer>

Log on to the computer you wish to attach to the network, making sure you log on as a local administrator. When you enter the above address into your client browser, it launches the Connect Computer Wizard. Internet Explorer may display a warning telling you that there is a problem with the website's certificate. You should click through this.

On the next screen, enter an Administrator name and password for the domain. The wizard will then ask you to choose a domain user account and to associate that account with the new client. It will also allow you to match an old local user account with one of the new domain-level user accounts you've created. This means that your users can keep their customised desktop and Start menus, their My Documents folder and their Internet Explorer favourites. This isn't really possible – or, at least, not straightforward – if you connect by simply associating the PC with the new domain.

CREATING A NETWORK SHARE

One of the most straightforward and practical benefits of using Windows Small Business Server is the ability to create shared folders that are always available. Creating a network share is easy. In the Server Management console, click Share (Local) in the left-hand pane. In the right-hand pane, click on Add a Shared Folder. As you click through the wizard, you tell it where you want to put the folder and which users should have access, and also what level of access each user should have.

Once this is completed, log on to the PC that requires access to the share. Open My Computer and, from the Tools menu, choose Map Network Drive. In the dialog box that opens, click Browse and select your domain name. You'll see a list of shared folders. Select the one you've created, click OK and complete the wizard. As long as you've given them the right permissions, your users can now access the network share. **CS**

Next month

WINDOWS SMALL BUSINESS SERVER II
Using Active Directory to increase security and cut administration time